(b) Setting up of Tourist complex at Karsha (Zanskar), Lamayuru and Nubra and Tourist Bungalow at Leh

(c) Supply of tents for Nubra valley

(d) Renovation of Gompas at Hemis,

(e) Refurbishment of Pethub Monastry, Leh and Sahasthaling Gompa at Nobra, Leh.

(f) Meditation facility in the International Health Centre at Cholamsar, Leh

(g) Construction of Public Conveniences at six places at Gompas in Leh

(h) Construction of Sindhu Darshan Ghat at Shey, Leh.

Tourist Protection Force

1640. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have mooted the idea to set up a Tourist Protection Force with personnel drawn from Delhi Police to protect the tourists from touts and thugs;

(b) whether this force will operate only in the NCT of Delhi;

(c) if so, whether tourists visiting other tourist spots like Agra, Jaipur and other cities/centres all over the country will be left to the mercy of touts; and

(d) whether Government will approach all other States to form such a Tourism Protection Force in their States to cover tourist spots?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) Tourism Department of Government of NCT of Delhi has taken up with Commissioner of Police, Delhi to set up a Cell to provide Tourist Protection.

(b) This will provide security and safety to foreign and domestic tourists in Delhi.

(c) The States of Jammu & Kashmir, Rajasthan, Goa, Kerala, Himachal Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh etc. have already set up Tourist Police.

(d) The Central Department of Tourism has requested the State Government to have tourism legislation and set up Tourist Police to safeguard

the security of tourists. Some other State Governments are considering introduction of such legislation.

Effect of Terrorist Attacks on Tourism

1641. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the tourism worldwide has been greatly affected by the attacks on the World Trade Centre, USA;

(b) if so, to what extent India being close to Afghanistan has been affected;

(c) whether it is also a fact that tourist visit to India has reduced from September, 2001 onwards;

(d) if so, to what extent;

(e) whether to encourage the tourists Government have decided to scrap entry fee hike at heritage sites; and

(f) if so, the other steps being taken to improve the tourist traffic of India?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) There has been a decline of about 20 per cent in the foreign tourist arrivals during September and October, 2001 as compared to the same period of the year 2000.

(e) The Government has reduced the entry fee for the foreign tourists in respect of ticketed World Heritage Sites.

(f) Various steps taken by the Government to improve the tourist traffic of India include development and improvement of tourist facilities, publicity and marketing efforts in the foreign countries through overseas offices, reorientation in marketing efforts by focussing on markets in South East Asia etc. Efforts have also been made to send appropriate signals to countries all over the world that India is a safe destination.

Development of Lakshadweep as Tourist Destination

1642. SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Territory of Lakshadweep known as the Coral Paradise has 36 islands, out of which 10 are inhabitated;